

NEWS RELEASE

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PORTION OF KUHIO BEACH TO BE CLOSED FOR TWO WEEKS IN FEBRUARY

The Diamond Head basin of Kuhio beach (between the Kapahulu Avenue storm drain and the groin fronting `Ohua Avenue along Kalakaua Avenue) will be closed to public access from Thursday, February 10 through Thursday, February 24 to conduct a small scale, offshore sand pumping evaluation as part of the planned Kuhio Beach renourishment project. The evaluation is part of the initial design phase of the project.

The sand pumping evaluation will test the feasibility of using sand deposits located 1,500 feet offshore of Kuhio Beach to renourish and widen the beach for public use. The evaluation will test both the quality and quantity (supply) of the available offshore sand and will provide detailed environmental and engineering data to be used in the actual restoration phase of the project which is anticipated to begin in 2001.

During the test, upwards of 5,000 cubic yards of sand will be collected by a hydraulic dredge which will pump the material through an 8-inch pipeline to a discharge point in the Diamond Head basin. The sand will then be spread over the current sand beach. The process will not impact the nearshore water quality. The evaluation will be conducted by Edward Noda and Associates under contract from the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

If the evaluation is successful, up to 20,000 cubic yards of sand would eventually be pumped using this method to renourish the entire stretch of Kuhio Beach from the Kapahulu groin to the area fronting the Duke Kahanamoku statue. An estimated \$3 million will be needed to complete the full renourishment, which will also include replacing the old, crumbling cribwalls surrounding the beach's two swimming basins. The new walls will make the area safer for swimmers and improve water quality through improved flushing and water circulation.

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**** MEDIA NOTE:** It will take a few days for the contractor to mobilize the necessary equipment before the pumping actually begins. It is estimated that the best days to photograph the pumping of off-shore sand onto the beach will be on Monday, February 14 and Tuesday, February 15. Please contact Aulani Wilhelm or Deborah Ward at 587-0320 for the latest information.